


MSA



**Missouri
Scholars
Academy**

A Community of Learning

he Missouri Scholars Academy is a three-week academic program for 330 of Missouri's gifted students who are ready to begin their junior year in high school. The Academy is a residential program held on the campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Funds to support the Missouri Scholars Academy are appropriated by the Missouri Legislature following State Board of Education recommendations. The Academy also benefits from the support of the Gifted Association of Missouri. The State Board of Education is responsible for setting policies of the Academy. Now in its second decade, the program is administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in cooperation with University of Missouri officials.

The Academy reflects Missouri's desire to strive for excellence in education at all levels. The program is based on the premise that Missouri's gifted youth must be provided with special opportunities for learning and personal development in order for them to realize their full potential.

With a carefully selected faculty and staff, a specially designed curriculum that focuses on the liberal arts, and a variety of stimulating extracurricular activities, the Academy enables students to be part of a unique learning community. The Academy provides a model that all schools can use in building or expanding their own programs for gifted students. Educators who have served as faculty members have used this experience to benefit students in their local schools.

Purposes

The three major purposes of the Missouri Scholars Academy are:

- To help gifted students achieve their full potential and motivate them to use their abilities in attaining higher goals.
- To encourage local schools to establish and/or improve programs for academically gifted youth by providing leadership in curriculum development and teaching strategies.
- To provide the state with trained teachers and special materials that can help improve education for academically gifted students.

Tuition & Expenses

Operating funds for the Academy are provided by the State of Missouri. Therefore, there is no cost to students or their families for tuition, room and board, Academy-related activities, books and instructional materials. However, the cost of travel to and from the Academy, plus personal and incidental expenses, are the responsibility of the student and family. Schools or local civic organizations may wish to provide financial assistance for students.

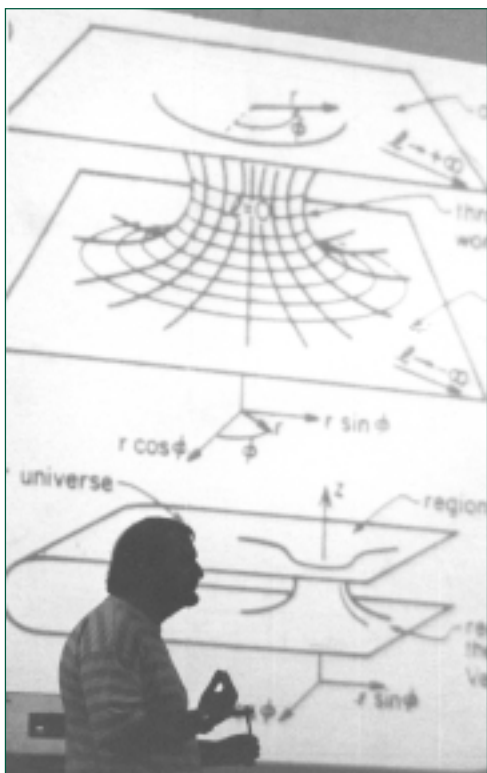
Faculty & Staff

Faculty and staff members for the Academy are selected from among highly qualified applicants from public and private schools, colleges and universities, private businesses and other organizations. Members are chosen on the basis of ability, interest and willingness to participate with students in rigorous and challenging work. Approximately 50 people serve in each Academy, with new and continuing appointments made each year so that there is both continuity and change.



Program & Curriculum

The Missouri Scholars Academy provides unique opportunities for students to enhance their academic skills, assimilate the accumulated knowledge of their culture, relate to contemporary issues, deepen understanding of themselves and their unique abilities, and engage with others in critical thinking and problem-solving activities.



The Academy's curriculum is designed to give participants a chance to pursue studies that differ from traditional educational programs. Guest lecturers, forums, cultural events and other programs during the Academy reinforce and extend the curriculum. The curriculum is organized into three areas of study:

Area I. Academics (Major)

On the basis of interests and abilities, each scholar will select one course of study from the four broad academic categories of mathematics, science, social studies and humanities. Scholars will spend three hours each day, six days each week, in intensive academic pursuits in this major course.

Area II. Academics (Minor)

Scholars will study a second academic field of their choice one hour each afternoon, Monday through Friday. They should select a general category that differs from that of their academic major.

Area III. Personal and Social Dynamics

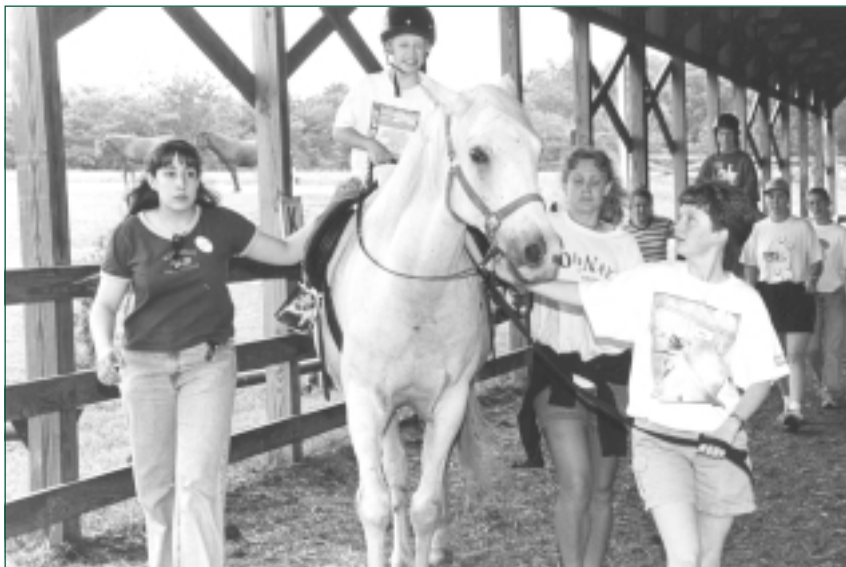
The curriculum in this area relates to the unique personal and social issues and responsibilities faced by academically gifted students. The goal is to provide scholars with greater insight and understanding of their special abilities, and their responsibilities to themselves and society. Scholars will attend an Area III class for one hour each afternoon, Monday through Friday.

The Co-curricular Program

Co-curricular activities are an important part of the Scholars Academy. A full schedule of diverse activities is offered on afternoons, evenings and weekends to enhance the Academy curriculum.

On afternoons and weekends, the scholars have an opportunity to participate in activities such as debate, journalism and art workshops, chorus, microcomputer and photography clubs, theater, community service program, creative writing classes, and exploring archaeology and anthropology museums. A limited recreation and exercise program also is offered.

In the evenings, the students attend the special Academy series of concerts, plays and lectures featuring outstanding speakers from throughout the state and nation. Social activities such as outdoor dances also are planned.





Facilities

The University of Missouri-Columbia, host for the Missouri Scholars Academy, is making every effort to provide a high-quality, safe and enjoyable experience for students and staff.

Students will be housed and will receive their meals in a campus residence hall. The residence hall is only a few minutes' walk from all classrooms, lecture halls, museums, labs and the library.

Recreational and co-curricular activities are available close to the residence hall. Churches and synagogues are a few blocks away. The residence hall has laundry machines.

The Academy's daily activities will be closely supervised by the co-directors of the Academy, the residence hall coordinator, members of the program staff, and resident assistants who will live with students in the residence hall. The University will provide transportation to special events or locations where Academy activities are held.

A special reception area for the Academy is staffed around the clock to assist students and their families.

Nominating Procedures & Selection Criteria

Each public school district and private school in Missouri is eligible to nominate at least one sophomore student for the Academy. Larger schools have the option of nominating more than one student on a prorated basis according to enrollment. Nominees must be Missouri residents enrolled in eligible Missouri schools.

Schools nominating students for the Academy are required to provide specific information to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. A special selection committee appointed by the Department screens and evaluates nominations. Participants are selected on the basis of the following criteria and factors:

- Student scores from selected individual intelligence and aptitude tests
- Grade point average
- Student essays
- Evidence of leadership, creativity, intellectual curiosity, problem-solving ability and initiative
- Projected benefits to the student for participating in the Academy
- Commitment to remain at the Academy throughout the entire three-week experience

All candidates are ranked by the selection committee. Some students are selected to provide for appropriate geographic and racial representation among the Academy's 330 participants.

Important Timeline*

NOVEMBER

- Student nomination forms and faculty and staff application forms distributed

JANUARY

- Deadline for faculty and staff applications
- Faculty and staff interviews

FEBRUARY

- Deadline for student nominations

APRIL

- Students notified of selection process results
- Students notified of academic major and minor offerings

JUNE

- Academy opens (second Sunday)

* *While the exact dates will vary from year to year, these are general guidelines.*

What the Scholars Say . . .

"I wish everyone could experience what it's like here — to be understood and to be challenged. So many teenagers today are so apathetic about the world around them. Here you are presented with the world and asked, "Now what will you do with it?" MSA has opened the door and I, for one, plan on walking through."

"Here, I had a chance to be challenged, to use my mind and see a broader potential within myself."

"The Academy was wonderful. Thanks for the chance to be what I've always wanted to be — understood."

"I feel I have a responsibility to be a leader at my school and in my community. Before coming [to MSA], I thought that I couldn't be a leader. Now, I think that knowledge and insight not shared and used to find a better way . . . is knowledge wasted."

— *Comments by Scholars*





*F*or more information, contact either of
the Academy co-directors:

David Welch, Director, Gifted Education Programs
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480
573-751-2453



Theodore Tarkow, Associate Dean
University of Missouri-Columbia
317 Lowry Hall, Columbia, MO 65211
573-882-4421